

**THE MILLENNIUM WORLD PEACE SUMMIT
OF RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL LEADERS**

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WORLD PEACE SUMMIT**



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March 12, 2002

H.H. Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji Maharaj
Sri Bhaini Saheb, District Ludhiana
Pincode-141126
Punjab, INDIA

Your Holiness,

It is with great pleasure that we write to you to request your participation in the creation of the World Council of Religious and Spiritual Leaders at a meeting to be held at the United Nations and Buddhamonthon in Bangkok from June 12-14th, 2002.

Since the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders that met at the United Nations in August of 2000, we have been focused on setting in motion the process for the formation of a Council where the world's religious leaders could come together working in collaboration with the United Nations to address the world's most critical issues. The need for such a Council was evident in the months leading up to the World Peace Summit and has become even more evident with the course of events in the last few months.

Those of us working since the Summit to organize this Council would like to invite you, as a pre-eminent and respected religious leader, to participate in the first meeting of the World Council of Religious and Spiritual Leaders. This meeting is by invitation only and regretfully cannot include designated representatives. This request for your personal participation is extended to you and a select group of prominent leaders who are recognized for their integrity, qualities of leadership and deep commitment to the mission of such a Council and willingness to serve in a personal capacity. The Council will not speak on behalf of the world religions especially when moral and ethical issues may clash with the teaching of a particular religion, nor is the aim to bring all religions into one super-religion. We envision only 50-75 religious leaders participating in the meeting, with additional regional religious and governmental leaders present and our international experts group.

During a meeting held last October at the Pocantico Conference Center of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund of the Steering Committee formed of participants in the World Peace Summit, it was agreed unanimously that we hold the initial meeting of this World Council of Religious and Spiritual Leaders at the United Nations facility in Bangkok, Thailand June 12th-14th, 2002 to focus on how the religions can work more closely together and with the United Nations to ease religious tensions in Asia. We have received tremendous support and enthusiasm from United Nations personnel in Asia for this meeting and are working closely with the religious leadership in Thailand, who in turn is working with the Thai government to support this initiative. There is also interest from the United Nations University for Peace to develop a joint program with the Council for peace building in the region.

The mission of the World Council of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, which emerged from the Steering Committee meeting is as follows:

The World Council of Religious and Spiritual Leaders aims to serve as a model and guide for the creation of a community of world religions. It seeks to inspire women and men of all faiths in the pursuit of peace and mutual understanding. It will undertake initiatives to provide the spiritual resources of the world's religious traditions to assist the United Nations and its agencies in the prevention, resolution and healing of conflicts, and in addressing global social and environmental problems. By promoting the practice of the universal human values shared by all religious traditions, and by uniting the human community for times of world prayer and meditation, the Council seeks to aid in developing the inner qualities and external conditions needed for the creation of a more peaceful, just and sustainable world society.

The role of religious leaders has never been more important in helping set a new direction for the human community. Although there have been many efforts to bring religious leaders together, we believe the underlying principle for the World Peace Summit and all our endeavors since has been the need for the leaders of the religious traditions and the United Nations to work in closer cooperation to build a community of the world's religions to work for the benefit of the global family.

In a fragile world that grows increasingly violent we hope to come together to further dialogue and to build a table of trust upon which we will explore innovative ways that religious leaders can contribute and give life to such a Council, making it an effective and powerful voice for peace.

We hope that you will be able to accept our invitation to the World Council Meeting. We kindly request that you confirm your participation with the Secretariat of The Millennium World Peace Summit before April 15th, 2002.

Please accept our deepest regards and assurances of our highest esteem.

Sincerely Yours,

Interim Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee

Joan Brown Campbell

Swami Dayananda

Reverend Joan Brown Campbell
Director, Department of Religion
Chautauqua Institution

Swami Dayananda Saraswati
Chairman, All India Movement for Seva

Oren Lyons

Chief Oren Lyons
Chief, Onandaga Nation

Arthur Schneier

Rabbi Arthur Schneier
Founder and President
Appeal of Conscience Foundation

Kamel AL-Sharif
Kamel AL-Sharif
Secretary General, Intl. Islamic Council
For Daw'a and Relief

Sheng-Yen
Master Sheng-Yen
Founder, Dharma Drum Mtn. Buddhist
Assoc.

Gregorios Theocharous
Gregorios Theocharous
Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain

Phra Thepsophon
Phra Thepsophon
Rector, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya
University

Bawa Jain
Bawa Jain
Secretary General,
The Millennium World Peace Summit